

The Washington Post

1515 L STREET, N. W. 223-6000

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005

July 29, 1968

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Stanford Medical Center
Palo Alto, Calif. 94304

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

I wrote our July 3 editorial on science and, having seen your letter of July 12 to Russ Wiggins and your more recent letter to Howard Simons, I hope you will allow me to reply.

The editorial did fail to distinguish the basic research share in the total \$17.2 billion budget and I can see how that omission would wound researchers as well as confuse the public.

But did it undermine the main point of the editorial, which was that science is "reluctant to accept the notion that it must compete with other worthy claimants for a slice of the budgetary pie; it has not yet accepted the principle that it must justify to the public its claim on the taxpayers' funds"? Donald Hornig for one would seem to agree (Science, July 12): "It is fair to say that some of the reaction (to proposed 1969 cuts) has been hysterical. In figuring out how to respond to the need to reduce spending, we need useful facts to help us decide where reductions can be made with the least damage..." In your letter to Wiggins, you had included a Scientific Research editorial using the kind of unsatisfying rhetoric--- "continuing national commitment"--that I find so hard to penetrate.

Should not university science have to justify its federal spending too?

I am only one of the hired hands here, but I see no reason for you to avoid this subject in your column, citing or not citing the Post editorial as your target.

Sincerely,


Stephen S. Rosenfeld